

THE WILSON BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

LATE in June the Editor drove by automobile over seven hundred miles of highway in northwestern Iowa. Two observations were made, one concerning the Bobolink, and the other concerning the Red-headed Woodpecker.

During the entire trip only four Bobolinks were seen. Ten years ago through the same territory we would have expected to see upwards of fifty of these birds. Our immediate conclusion is that the marked decrease in numbers of the Bobolink in this part of the country is the result of their slaughter in the south under government permit.

On one part of the drive, covering about 150 miles, our attention was drawn to the number of Red-headed Woodpeckers dead in the road. Seven were casually noted in this one section of driving. These birds were fresh enough to be easily identified without stopping the car. Doubtless a week's traffic would so obliterate the plumage that recognition might be much more difficult. Many of the highways are also dragged as often as once a week. We may assume, perhaps with fair accuracy, that each week discloses a new crop of highway cadavers. A very interesting and valuable mortality study might be made by one who is so situated as to be able to make a census on a given stretch of highway once a week, with fair regularity throughout the summer. To make the record satisfactory all cadavers, of birds at least, should be gathered up: two important ends would be served by this procedure, namely, the reliable identification of the specimens, and the prevention of duplication of count in a succeeding census.

The following short, and possibly incomplete, bibliography on the subject of highway mortality may be of interest to some readers:

- Stoner: *Science*, LXI, January 16, 1925. Pp. 56-57.
Dill: *Science*, LXIII, January 15, 1926. Pp.
Baldwin: *Science*, LXIII, April 2, 1926. Pp. 358-359.
Flint: *Science*, LXIII, April 23, 1926. Pp. 426-427.
Neff: *Oologist*, XLIII, April, 1926. Pp. 55-59.
A. H. H.: *Bird-lore*, XXVIII, July-August, 1926. Pp. 314-315.
Blocher: *Oologist*, XLIII, May, 1926. Pp. 66-67.
Burr: *Science*, LXIII, No. 1638, 1926. P. 524.
A. H. H.: *Bird-Lore*, XXIX, No. 5 1927. Pp. 391-392.
Grant: *Fins, Feathers and Fur*, No. 53, 1927. P. 213.
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QUITE recently there was founded in this country a society to be devoted to the study and propagation of exotic birds in captivity, and their preservation from

extinction. It is called the Avicultural Society of America, and proposes to work along lines similar to the Avicultural Society of England. The Society has already undertaken extensive co-operative work with the different species of the Parrakeet, as described by C. T. Metzger in the July-August *Condor*. If any of our readers are interested in such an organization they may secure information from Mr. Chas. T. Metzger, Secretary, 6312 South Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill.

MOST of our readers will remember that the United States Senate passed on April 18 last, an act known as the "Migratory Bird Conservation Act," or simply as the Norbeck Bill (S. 1271). There is also before Congress another bill commonly known as the Anthony Bill (H. R. 5467), which is essentially the old Marshland Conservation Bill, Public Shooting Grounds Bill, etc., with which everyone is familiar. The Anthony Bill provides for a hunter's license fee, and the shooting of game on the refuges to be established under the bill. The Norbeck Bill eliminates the hunter's license fee and substitutes federal appropriation; eliminates the public shooting grounds scheme and substitutes inviolate sanctuaries for game.

We have never been so sharply opposed to the federal license fee idea as some have been; and yet this principle seems to be closely linked with the shooting grounds principle. For, if the hunter pays the government for a license to shoot game, he may, with some justification, expect that money to be applied to the maintenance of shooting grounds stocked with game. On the other hand, under the Norbeck Bill, the government accepts none of the shooter's money, and is, therefore, under no obligation to provide sport, directly. Under this plan the government's sole purpose is to preserve the game—to prevent or retard extermination; at the same time, of course, indirectly preserving the sport of hunting. It seems to us that this plan is infinitely the better one.

We therefore favor the Norbeck Bill, and believe that every true conservationist and friend of wild life should make some effort to secure its passage in the House of Representatives this fall, without amendment or alteration.

THROUGH inadvertence the legends for the figures in Mr. Sutton's paper on a collection of hawks from Pennsylvania, which was published in the last (June) issue of the *BULLETIN*, were omitted. All of the figures showed the tails of Sharp-shinned Hawks, the first eight figures being of males and the last three being of females. We give below the complete legends for all the figures, as shown in the three cuts:

Fig. 1. An individual probably more than two years old. Note that rectrices are of the same length, that barring of outer rectrices is the same as that of the other rectrices, and that the tips of all rectrices are similar in shape.

Fig. 2. An individual probably in the first breeding plumage. Note that there are more bars on the outer than on other rectrices, and that barring is bilaterally asymmetrical.

Fig. 3. An individual probably in first breeding plumage. Note that there are more bars on the outer than on the other rectrices; that barring is bilaterally asymmetrical; and that the outer rectrices are noticeably longer than others, and with tips of different shape.

Fig. 4. An individual probably in first breeding plumage. Note the unusual number and shape of bars on outer rectrices.

Fig. 5. An individual probably in first breeding plumage. Note unusual bilateral asymmetry of barring, and difference in number of bars on inner and outer rectrices.

Fig. 6. A juvenal. Note large number of bars on outer rectrices, and difference in position of distal bar in other rectrices.

Fig. 7. A juvenal. Note tendency of tip toward rounded pattern of *A. cooperi*.

Fig. 8. A juvenal. Note bilaterally asymmetrical and somewhat abortive barring. Note also pointed character of tip of outer rectrix.

Fig. 9. A juvenal. Note asymmetrical barring, particularly of rectrix adjacent to the outer; note also the tendency of tip toward rounded pattern of *A. cooperi*.

Fig. 10. An individual probably in first breeding plumage. Note bilateral asymmetry of barring, and tendency of tip toward pattern of *A. cooperi*.

Fig. 11. An individual probably in first breeding plumage. Note tendency of tip toward rounded pattern of *A. cooperi*.

WITHOUT special legislative action a precedent has become pretty well established of holding our annual meeting in conjunction with the American Association for the Advancement of Science when the latter meets in the territory of the W. O. C. This custom has simply grown, and there are several reasons for it.

In the first place such a connection gave us a great deal of moral support in the past years when we especially needed it; and we may not be wholly past that period yet. We find that such an arrangement is very satisfactory to teachers, of whom there are a great many in our membership. It enables them to attend their professional meeting and the W. O. C. meeting on one journey. We also find that our meetings are always sure of a nucleus of attendance from this source.

When we meet with the A. A. A. S. we are always sure of the reduced railroad fare of one and a half for the round trip. This means a great deal to many who attend the meetings, and without it our attendance would certainly suffer to some extent. By going with the A. A. A. S. we are taken into new localities where we may have few or no members, and where we could not otherwise expect an invitation. Where we have no local committee of our own the A. A. A. S. makes all arrangements for a meeting place, and prints our program.

These are a few of the more cogent reasons for continuing our relations with the A. A. A. S. In accordance with this policy we should be due to meet in Des Moines in 1929; Cleveland in 1930; New Orleans in 1931; and Chicago in 1932. An invitation to meet in Des Moines in 1929 was received at the Nashville meeting. We understand also that the Chicago Academy of Sciences has extended an invitation to hold our 1932 meeting there. They have been our excellent hosts on two previous occasions. We should be ready to accept this

invitation unless it should seem more advisable to hold our meeting on the South Side, at the University, where the general meetings will likely be held.

One of our greatest difficulties in the past has been too much delay in completing the meeting arrangements. We are glad, therefore, to note a tendency on the part of prospective hosts to extend an invitation a couple of years in advance. In fact, Nashville repeated the invitation annually for three years in advance of the first meeting held there. When we meet with the A. A. A. S. a local invitation is not necessary, but is appreciated nevertheless. In recent years our meetings have been well attended, and our programs have been excellent, amply repaying those in attendance. We also believe that the meetings stimulate local interest in our field of scientific work. Our territory is extensive, and it is to our advantage to place the meetings in all parts of it.

THE ANNUAL MEETING AT ANN ARBOR

THE DATES of the annual meeting have been set for the two days following Thanksgiving Day, namely, November 30 and December 1, at Ann Arbor, Michigan. The sessions will be held in the new building of the Museum of Zoology of the University of Michigan.

It is expected that the two days will be devoted to the formal programs, and if any field work is done, it will probably be on December 2. Considerable time will be desired by many of those in attendance for an inspection of the magnificent new Museum Building in which our meetings will be held.

In June of the present year the University of Michigan completed and opened a new and large building for the Museum of Zoology. This building is undoubtedly one of the finest in the country for museum purposes. The W. O. C. may consider it a real privilege and honor to be one of the first among the scientific societies to hold a meeting here. Much of the credit for the new Museum belongs to Dr. Alexander G. Ruthven, Director of the Museum, and also recently made Dean of Administration of the University.

There are several reasons for believing that the Ann Arbor meeting will be unusually well attended. In the first place we have forty-six members in Michigan, and we expect them all to attend. Ann Arbor is easily reached from points in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and we expect a little better than the usual attendance from these states. There will undoubtedly be some representation from the south and from west of the Mississippi River. In addition, the Inland Bird Banding Association will hold its annual meeting at the same time. So we confidently believe that our next meeting will have a larger attendance than any previous one. The officers will soon be at work on the program, and we urge our members to make an early report to the Secretary concerning any contribution to the program.